

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-3, 7-9, and 13-14 stand rejected on prior art grounds. Claims 4-6, 10-12, and 15-17 were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but the Examiner has indicated that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1-3, 7-9 and 13-14 are canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby, rendering the rejection of these claims moot. Additionally, claims 4 and 5 are amended herein so that they are in independent form, including all of the limitations of claim 1, and claim 6 depends from claim 5. Claims 10 and 11 are amended herein so that they are in independent form, including all of the limitations of claim 7, and claim 12 depends from claim 11. Finally, claims 15 and 16 are amended herein so that they are in independent form, including all of the limitations of claim 13, and claim 17 is amended so that it depends from claim 16.

The Applicants note that claims 4-6, 10-12 and 15-17 are properly supported in the specification and accompanying drawings, and no new matter is being added. Consequently, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the objections.

II. Formal Matters and Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 4-6, 10-12 and 15-17, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct from the prior art

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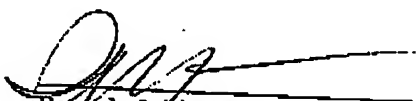
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of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary. Please charge any deficiencies and credit any overpayments to Attorney's Deposit Account Number 09-0456.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 6/27/06


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